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LET US MEET IN PEKING

It was not by chance that in 1956 Sudanese students participated in the IVth Congress of the International Union of Students in Prague. In January of that year the Sudan was declared an independent country and only after this could we take part in IUS activities. The British rulers did their best to isolate us from all democratic forces in the world even going so far as to introduce a law which made relations with the IUS punishable by seven years imprisonment. Only when we drove their Governor General out of the country could we attend the IUS IVth Congress. Our example is typical of many students in Africa who have friendly feelings towards the IUS but who cannot participate in its activities because of rulings by the colonialists forbidding such contact. But we are confident that in the near future they too will succeed in throwing out the colonialists and will join the world student family.

For us, Sudanese students, the Vth IUS Congress scheduled for Peking, in September, is of particular importance. At this Congress we shall meet our fellow students of China and the other Asian countries, shall learn more about their life and struggle for freedom and the maintenance of independence. There is an old Arabic saying: "We should seek knowledge and education even if we have to go to China"--since China, in those days, was very far away. And we shall go to China to seek the knowledge and rich experience of our Chinese friends.

At the Vth Congress we shall meet our fellow students from other parts of the world too and shall have discussions and exchange opinions with them on all matters of concern to students. It is our duty to find all points of agreement and common actions among students and evaluate all the experiences which will help our fight for peace, against colonialism, and for a better student life and community.

Since the last IUS Congress, the student fight for peace has overcome many difficulties, become stronger and more militant. The students in Egypt together with their own people and the support of many, many others throughout the world, were able to defeat the Tripartite aggression and emerge more consolidated and united in the fight for the maintenance of independence and peace. The Iraqi student demonstrations against the Baghdad Pact and in solidarity with their Egyptian friends strengthened even more their unity and determination to resist military pacts. Jordanian students launched a heroic fight against the Eisenhower Doctrine--a fight which attracted even young school boys and broadened their student movement. Syrian students also stood firm against the Eisenhower Doctrine and defended their independence defeating all intrigues against their homeland. The ascending graphs of struggle and unity of the Middle Eastern students for peace and independence is clear evidence of the successes of the student movement and its development in recent years as an important force in the fight for peace.

PEACE BRINGS STUDENTS TOGETHER

Some years ago, the call for peace was considered by some sections of students as a partisan policy of other student groupings. But now, with the growing danger of atomic war--so horrible as to defy imagination--resistance becomes stronger, involving students with the most diverse backgrounds and from the most distant countries. The fight for peace once caused a split and misunderstanding in the student movement--but is now becoming a cause of common understanding and agreement among larger sections of students. This fact alone calls on us to meet in Peking and discuss once more the question of peace, our past attitude to this problem, our recent experiences and to seek new ways by which everyone of us can contribute to its maintenance.

Another important development in the student world in the past two years, is its stronger anti-colonial position. Striking examples are provided by students from Algeria, Cyprus, Tunisia, the Cameroons and West Africa. The fight of Algerian students alone gained world-wide attention and the sympathy of the overwhelming majority of students. Students from the West and the East, from Latin America and Africa, all expressed solidarity with their Algerian colleagues. The fight against colonialism which was one of the main issues leading to division among students in 1950-51, on the contrary, nowadays, is a cause of common agreement and support. The strong worldwide solidarity offered Algerian colleagues exposes the artificial grounds for the present split in the international student movement. It makes it incumbent on all of us to meet in Peking and discuss how we can help our Algerian friends and contribute to the fight of other students against colonialism.

AN OPEN FORUM

For some students it may be difficult to directly assist the fight against colonialism or for peace; or they may not agree with many of the IUS member organizations as to the way such issues should be handled. These students will find an open forum during the Congress sessions to express their opinions.

Another new feature in the student movement in recent years is that many student organizations which formerly faced colonial oppression have now attained freedom and are helping in the construction of their countries. Such is the case with students in the Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Malaya and Ghana. In the past these student organizations concentrated on the fight against colonialism, but now they are faced with the task of safeguarding their independence and reconstructing their newly independent nations. Such student organizations must learn the experiences of others who have passed through the same stages. It is of utmost importance that the next Peking Congress pay full attention to this problem.

Sudanese students will be very interested to know what their Chinese, Indian, Indonesian and Ceylonese friends think about this question to exchange opinions on our work for national construction and for the reform of education. Let us hope that the Peking Congress will be a stepping-stone in the improvement and progress of our national activities.

All these developments call upon us to do away with a cold war policy in our student movement, to meet in Peking and to reach agreement on general points of common interest. The fact that the student movement has achieved notable progress in this respect over the last two years impels us to channel these efforts and once again mobilize our forces for honest and sincere student aims. The Moscow Festival and the Paris Games were proof of the possibility of common actions and cooperation among students. The Latin American Student Congress and the Asian-African Student Conference were the results of a strong tendency among students for cooperation and joint action.

At the last Latin American Students' Congress clear decisions were adopted for cooperation with all students and particularly with those of Asia and Africa. For students of Africa to have direct relations with Latin American students may become an important factor in the development of the activities of our young organizations. We are aware of Latin American students' traditional struggle for national independence in the fullest sense of the word, for the reform and democratization of education. We are proud of the fact that they possess one of the most organized regional student movements and would like to meet with them in Peking to learn from them how to develop our work for a more united African student movement.

THE WORLD CHANGES

Apart from the strong tendency for closer contact growing among students, we must not overlook the negative forces that have been at work in the past period. It is important for us that while going forward we must try to clear all obstacles from our path. It is with dissatisfaction and sorrow that we see the activities of some students who are still trying to pursue a policy of cold war and enmity among us. Their real nature and harmful designs were exposed at the VIIth ISC in Ibadan. They tried to obstruct any call for cooperation and to defeat it, even by procedural methods. The representative of the Danish students, for instance, put a motion that all proposals for cooperation must be passed by a 2/3 majority of the International Student Conference. In fact, he was trying to put the cooperation issue under the influence of 1/3 of the Conference delegates, but his motion was defeated and condemned as an open attack against those proposals really seeking cooperation, particularly with the IUS. Such students are to be found even outside ISC itself. But, on the other hand, there are also students who seek cooperation. Outside the framework of ISC, students expressed their desire for cooperation at the

last Latin American Congress, at the Sinaia Seminar in Rumania and in bilateral relations between some foundation members of ISC and members of IUS.

Inside the IUS, too, there are many student organizations that have very strong reservations and doubts regarding ISC but this will never lead them to take up a position against international cooperation or to disregard the fact that ISC exists.

Let us meet in Peking to discuss this question too and to put an end to cold war activities among students and pave the way for better and friendlier relations within the student community.

CAREFUL AND ACTIVE PREPARATIONS

To achieve the best results at the Vth Congress in Peking, we must prepare carefully and actively for it. I can recall the experience of our organization in preparing for the IVth Congress in Prague. Only some student leaders and members of the delegations read the main report of the IUS Secretariat and I can say in all truth, that the majority of the students did not even hear about it. They only learned about the report after the delegation came back from Prague. This kind of preparation limits the real creative contribution ordinary students can make to the Congress. We must try to have a full discussion of the main problems of the student movement among the mass of students. This is a difficult task, I know, but it is indispensable for the success of the Congress and for the enrichment of student experience.

I hope we shall all prepare actively for the coming Congress, discuss freely and generally among ourselves all positive and negative sides of the work of the IUS, discover its shortcomings and difficulties.

I also hope we shall meet this September in Peking, healthy and more determined to improve our activities in all fields and to better organize our common efforts.

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